

# The LEAP YEAR VALENTINE

"He Is in Her Hands This Year!"—How Will This Affect the Valentines of the New Feminist Era?



Miss Mae Morse, Member of the Debutantes' Club, Pledged to Propose Marriage Before the Year Is Out.



THIS is leap year, tomorrow is St. Valentine's day—and we are living in a "Feminist" era. Figure the combination of circumstances and judge for yourself what the consequences may be. Before Feminism came to be the significant force it is credited with being today, leap year was a whimsicality. There were traditions, strange stories handed down to the credulous, of actual cases where women proposed marriage under the privileges assumed to belong to the leap year calendar. And the joke was always good. It helped social merriment. It excused merry jests. It gave point to certain harmless escapades of parlor and summer resort.

Then, along with so many other changes, in dress, in manners, in customs as well as costumes, came changes in the mating formulas. It became apparent that women occasionally did propose, without waiting for leap year. And Feminism, that specter dreaded of timid men, began to flourish amazingly, and to recognize woman's rights to take initiative in business, in society, in personal relations. We-Won't-Get-Married Clubs as well as We-Will-Get-Married Clubs began to spring up, often as a joke, but often, too, quite plainly indicating a rebellious disposition. Here is the Debutante's Club, organized by twenty young women in Brooklyn, N. Y., and pledging each member to ask a man to marry her before the year is out. Miss Adele Huhn was elected president, Miss Mabel McKeever was elected vice-president and Miss Mae Morse secretary. The club insists that it is not acting jocularly, but has the serious purpose of defying a tradition that has hampered women from the beginning of time.

What effect will such movements, such attitudes of mind, have on the venerable traditions of St. Valentine? Shall she send the tender symbolism to him? Is Cupid's whole game to be revised? The question is not trivial. Under the influence

of the new rebellion it is possible that a revision of the time-honored sentiments are to find an actual, practical beginning. Many a social change has begun in jest. Many a temple has been pulled down, many a statute rewritten, under the spell of what at first appeared to be but a whimsicality. St. Valentine's day may make no open revelation. But its secret history may tell a story just the same.

If we could know this secret history, if we could know of all the valentines, if we could know all that was said as well as written under the spell of St. Valentine and his festival, we should have a profounder knowledge of human nature, a deeper critical insight into that business called Love. We should know whether it is true that the coming of Feminism really is changing our social system, however subtly, or whether masculine and feminine hearts are remaining pretty much the same as they always have been. In the end we shall discover, probably, that, though fashions may change, even fashions of proposal, the eternal elements that determine the social partnership will go on being what they have been since the beginning of time.

Miss Adele Huhn, President, and Miss Mabel McKeever, Secretary of the "Propose-This-Year" Debutantes' Club.

